

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		Number: 1043-42
SUBJECT: Charter for Committee of Scientists	DATE: September 8, 1997	
	OPI: Forest Service	

1 PURPOSE

1. This charter establishes the Committee of Scientists. The purpose of this advisory committee is to provide scientific and technical advice to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Chief of the Forest Service on improvements that can be made in the National Forest System Land and Resource Management planning process.
 - b The Committee should address such topics as how to consider the following in land and resource management plans: biological diversity, use of ecosystem assessments in land and resource management planning, spatial and temporal scales for planning, public participation processes, sustainable forestry, interdisciplinary analysis, and any other issues that the Committee identifies that should be addressed in revised planning regulations.
 - c In its report, the Committee shall make recommendations on how best to accomplish sound resource planning within the established framework of environmental laws and within the statutory mission of the Forest Service. The Committee shall also provide technical advice on the land and resource management planning process; and provide material for the Forest Service to consider for incorporation into the revised planning regulations. The Committee shall also recommend improvements in Forest Service coordination with other Federal land management or resource protection agencies, state and local government agencies, and tribal governments recognizing the unique roles and responsibilities of each agency in the planning process.

2. TERM

- a Unless renewed, this Committee will terminate upon the publication in the Federal Register of a proposed rule revising the land and resource management regulations at 36 CFR Part 219, or 2 years from the date of filing, whichever is first.
- b The Committee charter expires 2 years from the date of filing, or when the committee terminates, if termination occurs first.

3 MEMBERSHIP

- a The Committee shall consist of no more than 12 members and a Committee Chair appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. Officers or employees of the Forest Service may not serve as members of the Committee.
- b The Committee shall consist of representatives of a variety of academic disciplines, including but not limited to, the following: forest and range ecology, fish and wildlife biology, silviculture, hydrology, natural resource economics, sociology, public participation and conflict management, ecosystem management, land management planning, and natural resource law. Committee members should have a demonstrated ability to work across scientific and resource management disciplines. Collectively, the members should represent a diversity of disciplines and perspectives, have a knowledge of the National Forest System, insights into the National Forest Management Act and its implementation, and National Forest System planning.
- c A vacancy on the Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.
- d Equal opportunity practices, in line with USDA policies, will be followed in all appointments to the Committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the Committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership should include to the extent practicable individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

4 DUTIES

- a The Committee shall prepare and submit to the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee, and the Chief of the Forest Service a work plan that outlines planned activities and time lines for accomplishing tasks relative to the purpose and scope.
- b The Committee shall produce and deliver its report 4 months from its initial meeting, unless additional time is needed.
- c The Committee's report shall be published and made publicly available.
- d The Committee shall also be available for consultation with the Chief of the Forest Service or his designee after delivery of the report until publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register.
- e The Committee will report to the Secretary of Agriculture through the Chief of the Forest Service and the Under Secretary of NRE.

5 ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATIONS COSTS

- a While attending meetings of the Committee, the members shall be entitled to receive compensation of \$100.00 per day. Members shall also be provided per diem and travel expenses approved by the Chairman.
- b Estimated operating costs of the Committee are \$250,000 and .5 staff years.
- c At the Committee's request, the Chief of the Forest Service shall make employees of the Forest Service available to the Committee for technical and administrative assistance.

6 NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

- a Committee members shall be notified personally of the date, time, and place of Committee meetings.

Committee meetings shall be held in locations and in such a manner as to allow members of the public to attend.

- b The Committee will meet approximately once or twice a month for approximately 4 months while it prepares its report. The Committee may convene other meetings as necessary until completion of its report.

7 REPORTS

- a The Committee may use the Forest Service for support.
- b The Committee will report to the Secretary of Agriculture through the Chief of the Forest Service and the Under Secretary of NRE.